

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 HA-05 BIB-01 AF-10 /119 W
-----126401 261625Z /43

R 261421Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6866
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN POUCH
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY LONDON POUCH
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW POUCH
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA POUCH
AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
AMEMBASSY SEOUL POUCH
USINT HAVANA
USLO PEKING
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 GEORGETOWN 1679

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PEPR, GY
SUBJECT: GOG SETS FORTH "GUIDELINES" FOR GUYANESE JOURNALISTS

BEGIN SUMMARY. MEDIA SOURCE INFORMED EMBASSY THAT ACTING
FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER HUBERT JACK AND MININFORMATON
SHIRLEY FIELD-RIDLEY MET ON MAY 19 WITH EDITORS AND SENIOR
REPORTERS OF THE TWO GOVERNMENT-OWNED DAILY NEWSPAPERS, THE
MORNING CHRONICLE AND EVENING CITIZEN. JOURNALISTS WERE TOLD
THAT HENCEFORTH NEWS COVERAGE MUST EMPHASIZE GUYANA'S
"SOCIALIST THRUST," AND GIVE PRIORITY TO REPORTS FROM
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"FRIENDLY, PROGRESSIVE" COUNTRIES SUCH AS THE SOVIET
UNION, NORTH KOREA AND EAST GERMANY. END SUMMARY.

1. MINISTERS JACK AND FIELD-RIDLEY SAID PRIME MINISTER
AND CABINET HAD DECIDED THAT IN THE FUTURE, PAPERS MUST
PUT SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON GUYANA'S "SOCIALIST THRUST" AND
THAT PRIORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN TO NEWS STORIES OF WHAT

OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES ARE PROVIDING IN THE WAY OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO GUYANA. WHEN ASKED ABOUT PUBLICITY ON WHAT THE US, UNITED KINGDOM, CANADA, VENEZUELA AND BRAZIL HAD PROVIDED IN THE WAY OF ASSISTANCE, JACK SAID THAT COVERAGE SHOULD BE MINIMAL BECAUSE, AFTER ALL, SUCH AID WAS REALLY ONLY RECOMPENSE FOR WHAT THOSE COUNTRIES HAD "TAKEN" FROM GUYANA. JACK INFORMED THE AUDIENCE THAT PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM HAD DECIDED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT ONLY LIMITED PUBLICITY SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE LINES OF CREDIT RECENTLY EXTENDED TO GUYANA FROM VENEZUELA AND BRAZIL. FURTHERMORE, THE JOURNALISTS WERE TOLD TO SCRUTINIZE CLOSELY AND DOWNPLAY NEWS REPORTS FROM THE US, UK, CANADA, VENEZUELA AND BRAZIL BECAUSE THOSE COUNTRIES "HAVE AXES TO GRIND."

2. JACK INFORMED THE GROUP THAT THE GOG HAD RECEIVED COMPLAINTS FROM DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES CONCERNING NEWS COVERAGE OF THEIR NATIONS. THE PRC AMBASSADOR TO GUYANA, WANG CHAN-YUAN, COMPLAINED OVER THE USE IN THE GUYANESE PRESS OF A REUTER DISPATCH FROM HONG KONG WHICH REFERRED TO THE PEOPLE'S CONGRESS IN PEKING AS A "RUBBER STAMP." AND, SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO GUYANA, VLADIMIR KOTENEV HAD ALSO COMPLAINED ABOUT THE PUBLICATION IN THE CHRONICLE OF AN AP WIREPHOTO FROM BONN SHOWING FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO HELPING SECRETARY BREZHNEV TO GET OUT OF A CHAIR.
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3. THOUGH THE MINISTERS ADMITTED THAT THE CREDIBILITY OF THE GOG MEDIA HAD BEEN CALLED INTO QUESTION DUE TO ITS SELECTIVE COVERAGE OF THE NEWS, PARTICULARLY, ITS FAILURE TO REPORT ON THE GROWING OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO CHANGE THE CONSTITUTION; NEVERTHELESS, THE "SOCIALIST THRUST" OF GUYANA IS TO BE GIVEN TOP PRIORITY. FURTHERMORE, THE MEDIA WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPRESS SENSITIVE NEWS STORIES EVEN IF THEY APPEAR IN OTHER PUBLICATIONS SUCH AS CHEDDI JAGAN'S MIRROR OR THE WEEKLY CATHOLIC STANDARD.

4. THE JOURNALISTS WERE TOLD THAT PHOTO COVERAGE OF GOG MINISTERS SHOULD EMPHASIZE PROGRAMS OR PROJECTS WITH WHICH THE MINISTERS WERE INVOLVED, AND NOT THE MINISTERS THEMSELVES. THIS RULE DOES NOT APPLY, HOWEVER, TO EITHER PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM OR DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER REID.

5. JACK ALSO OUTLINED GOG ATTITUDES TOWARD SEVERAL INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. IN REGARDS TO THE GUYANA/SURINAM BORDER DISPUTE, DISCUSSIONS ARE CONTINUING, BUT THE GOG HAS NOT

YET MADE A DECISION AS TO ITS NEXT MOVE. THE GOG WILL NOT CRITICIZE ETHIOPIA EITHER FOR ITS MILITARY ACTION AGAINST SOMALIA OR THE ERITREAN SEPARATISTS BECAUSE OF GUYANA'S BOUNDARY PROBLEMS WITH VENEZUELA. NEITHER WILL THE GOG TAKE A POSITION ON THE RECENT INVASION OF ZAIRE BY REBLES BASED IN ANGOLA. (EMBASSY SOURCE ADVISED THAT THEN-FOREIGN MINISTER FRED WILLS TOLD HIM SOME TIME AGO THAT THE GOG CONSIDERED ZAIRE PRESIDENT MOBUTU TO BE A CIA AGENT.)

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 GEORGETOWN 1679

6. COMMENT: THE PRESS "GUIDANCE" PROVIDED BY JACK AND FIELD-RIDLEY INDICATES AN APPARENT LACK OF CONCERN FOR THE INCREASINGLY VOCAL CRITICISM THE GOG HAS BEEN RECEIVING OVER THE FAILURE OF THE TWO GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED DAILIES (WHICH HAVE A VIRTUAL MONTPOLY IN THE DAILY NEWS-PAPER FIELD IN GUYANA) TO PROVIDE ANY SORT OF DETAILED COVERAGE OF THE ACTIVITIES OF GROUPS OPPOSED TO GOG EFFORTS TO REPLACE THE CONSTITUTION. (GOVERNMENT PAPERS HAVE

EVEN REFUSED TO ACCEPT PAID ADVERTISEMENTS.) THEIR
SESSION WITH THE MANAGEMENT OF THE CHRONICLE AND CITIZEN
WOULD APPEAR TO SIGNAL A GOG INTENT TO EXERCISE AN EVEN
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TIGHTER CONTROL OVER WHAT DOES AND DOES NOT APPEAR IN
THESE TWO PAPERS IN THE FUTURE.
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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